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Examiner: Not Assigned

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Date

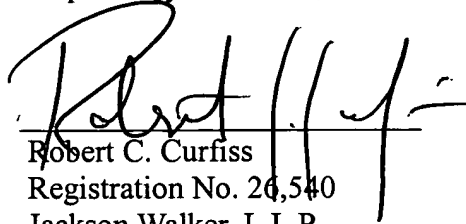
Rexie Trent  
Signature

1. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§1.97-1.99, Applicant hereby submits reference of which he or she is aware that may be material to the examination of this application, and of which there may be a duty to disclose in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.56. The filing of this Information Disclosure Statement shall not be construed to be an admission that the information cited in the statement is, or is considered to be, material to patentability as defined in 37 C.F.R. § 1.56(b), nor shall the filing of this Information Disclosure Statement be construed as a representation that a search has been made.
2. The references are listed on the accompanying Forms PTO-1449, and a copy of each reference is provided herewith.
3. This Information Disclosure Statement:
  - ☐ Accompanies a new patent application submitted herewith.
  - ☐ Is being filed within 3 months after the filing date of the application.
  - ☒ Before the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits.
  - ☐ After each of the above, but before the mailing date of either a final action or Notice of Allowance and is accompanied by a:
    - ☐ Certification, or
    - ☐ 1806 fee (37 C.F.R. § 1.17(p)).

[ ] After all of the above, but before payment of the Issue Fee. The Statement is accompanied by a certification and a petition requesting consideration of the Statement and a petition fee of \$130 (37 C.F.R. § 1.17(i)(1)).

4. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees, if any, or discrepancies in fees required, to Deposit Account 10-0096.
5. Undersigned counsel hereby requests a telephone conference with the Examiner if there are any questions. It is respectfully requested that the references be considered by the Examiner, be made a part of the official record, and be cited in the issued patent.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert C. Curfiss", is written over a horizontal line.

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**TRANSMITTAL  
FORM**

(to be used for all correspondence after initial filing)

|                                                                                         |                      |                         |                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>TRANSMITTAL<br/>FORM</b><br>(to be used for all correspondence after initial filing) | Application Number   | 10/730,862              |                 |
|                                                                                         | Filing Date          | December 9, 2003        |                 |
|                                                                                         | First Named Inventor | B. Steve Sarten, et al. |                 |
|                                                                                         | Art Unit             | 1742                    |                 |
|                                                                                         | Examiner Name        | Unknown                 |                 |
| Total Number of Pages in This Submission                                                | 124                  | Attorney Docket Number  | 122010.0001.002 |

**ENCLOSURES (check all that apply)**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |         |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fee Transmittal Form<br><input type="checkbox"/> Fee Attached<br><input type="checkbox"/> Amendment / Reply<br><input type="checkbox"/> After Final<br><input type="checkbox"/> Affidavits/declaration(s)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Extension of Time Request<br><input type="checkbox"/> Express Abandonment Request<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement<br><input type="checkbox"/> Certified Copy of Priority Document(s)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Response to Missing Parts/ Incomplete Application<br><input type="checkbox"/> Response to Missing Parts under 37 CFR 1.52 or 1.53 | <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing(s)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Licensing-related Papers<br><input type="checkbox"/> Petition<br><input type="checkbox"/> Petition to Convert to a Provisional Application<br><input type="checkbox"/> Power of Attorney, Revocation Change of Correspondence Address<br><input type="checkbox"/> Terminal Disclaimer<br><input type="checkbox"/> Request for Refund<br><input type="checkbox"/> CD, Number of CD(s) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> After Allowance Communication to Group<br><input type="checkbox"/> Appeal Communication to Board of Appeals and Interferences<br><input type="checkbox"/> Appeal Communication to Group (Appeal Notice, Brief, Reply Brief)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Proprietary Information<br><input type="checkbox"/> Status Letter<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Enclosure(s)<br>(please identify below):<br><b>FORM PTO-1449 and cited references; acknowledgment postcard</b> |         |  |
| <table border="1"><tr><td>Remarks</td><td></td></tr></table>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Remarks |  |
| Remarks                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |         |  |

**SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT**


|                         |                                          |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Firm or Individual name | Robert C. Curfiss<br>Jackson Walker L.P. |
| Signature               |                                          |
| Date                    | April 6, 2004                            |

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |               |      |               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------|---------------|
| I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO or deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on the date shown below. |               |      |               |
| Typed or printed name                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Reece Freider |      |               |
| Signature                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |               | Date | April 6, 2004 |

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.5. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

If you need assistance in completing the form, call 1-800-PTO-9199 and select option 2.

|                                                                                                                                                                             |               |                                                     |            |                                           |                             |           |                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| FORM PTO-1449<br>(Modified)                                                                                                                                                 |               | U.S. Dept. of Commerce<br>Patent & Trademark Office |            | ATTY DKT. NO.:<br><br>122010.0001.002     | SER. NO.:<br><br>10/730,862 |           |                            |
| <b>INFORMATION DISCLOSURE<br/>STATEMENT BY APPLICANT</b><br><br>(Use several sheets if necessary)                                                                           |               |                                                     |            |                                           |                             |           |                            |
| (37 CFR 1.98(b))                                                                                                                                                            |               |                                                     |            | APPLICANT:<br><br>B. Steve Sarten, et al. |                             |           |                            |
|                                                                                            |               |                                                     |            | FILING DATE:<br><br>December 9, 2003      | GROUP:<br><br>1742          |           |                            |
| <b>U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS</b>                                                                                                                                                |               |                                                     |            |                                           |                             |           |                            |
| Examiner Initial                                                                                                                                                            | Patent Number | Issue Date                                          |            | Patentee                                  | Class                       | Sub-class | Filing Date If Appropriate |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 2,550,445     | 04/24/1951                                          |            | Benning et al.                            | 204                         | 247       | 07/17/1945                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 3,930,531     | 01/06/1976                                          |            | Frehsen et al.                            | 164                         | 497       | 05/28/1974                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 4,150,247     | 04/17/1979                                          |            | Suarez                                    | 373                         | 54        | 06/05/1978                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 4,578,163     | 03/25/1986                                          |            | Kunter et al.                             | 205                         | 569       | 12/03/1984                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 5,458,745     | 10/17/1995                                          |            | Hradil                                    | 205                         | 589       | 01/23/1995                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 5,752,206     | 05/12/1998                                          |            | Frink et al.                              | 588                         | 20        | 04/04/1996                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 4,421,556     | 12/20/1983                                          |            | Windt et al.                              | 75                          | 393       | 12/28/1982                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 5,183,541     | 02/02/1993                                          |            | Snyder et al.                             | 205                         | 560       | 10/02/1991                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 4,792,385     | 12/20/1988                                          |            | Snyder et al.                             | 264                         | .5        | 11/03/1987                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 5,262,019     | 11/16/1993                                          |            | Snyder et al.                             | 205                         | 596       | 12/16/1992                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 5,217,585     | 06/08/1993                                          |            | Snyder et al.                             | 205                         | 589       | 12/20/1991                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 5,156,722     | 10/20/1992                                          |            | Snyder et al.                             | 205                         | 43        | 07/25/1991                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 3,117,000     | 01/07/1964                                          |            | Schlain et al.                            | 75                          | 726       | 03/15/1962                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 3,432,410     | 03/11/1969                                          |            | Cuenot                                    | 205                         | 596       | 11/27/1964                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 3,928,153     | 12/23/1975                                          |            | Gendron et al.                            | 205                         | 596       | 02/24/1975                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                             | 3,902,896     | 09/02/1975                                          |            | Borbely et al.                            | 75                          | 726       | 05/22/1974                 |
| <b>FOREIGN PATENT OR PUBLISHED FOREIGN PATENT APPLICATION</b>                                                                                                               |               |                                                     |            |                                           |                             |           |                            |
|                                                                                                                                                                             |               | Document Number                                     | Publ. Date | Country or Patent Office                  | Class                       | Sub-Class | Translation Yes No         |
|                                                                                                                                                                             |               |                                                     |            |                                           |                             |           |                            |
| <b>OTHER DOCUMENTS (Including Author, Title, Date, Relevant Pages, Place of Publication)</b>                                                                                |               |                                                     |            |                                           |                             |           |                            |
|                                                                                                                                                                             |               |                                                     |            |                                           |                             |           |                            |
| EXAMINER                                                                                                                                                                    |               |                                                     |            | DATE CONSIDERED                           |                             |           |                            |
| EXAMINER: Initial citation considered. Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant. |               |                                                     |            |                                           |                             |           |                            |

\*It is believed these references are potentially relevant but applicant has not determined whether or not these two online printouts represent prior art as they were a result of search performed after applicant's date of invention.

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